

Sunday, October 25, 2020

Text: James 2:8-13

Title: Kingdom Love

*Proposition:*

In James 2.8-13, James gives the churches four reasons to repent of favoritism and to keep Christ's Law to love their neighbor as themselves.

*Outline:*

Reason 1: Believers can obey their King's Law (v.8). (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:36-40; Luke 10:29-37; Romans 13:10; Galatians 5:14)

Reason 2: Favoritism is shattering the King's Law (vv.9-11).

Reason 3: You will be judged under the King's Law (vv.12-13a). (Romans 8:1; 3:28; Matthew 12:36-37; 25:31-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12; Matthew 5:7; Matthew 18:23-35)

Reason 4: The King's Mercy triumphs over The King's judgment (v.13b).

*Study Guide Questions:*

(As always, leaders who use these questions can pick and choose which they think are best for their group. I include more than enough so you have freedom to give direction, and not so you feel like you need to ask or answer them all.)

- As you've meditated on James 1:26-2:7, are there areas in your life which you've been concerned you've been a hearer instead of a doer? As you've reflected on the sin of partiality, where have you seen favoritism in your life? How have you begun to change?
- What connection is there between favoritism and loving your neighbor as yourself? Why does James transition to this command in 2:8?
- Where have you seen God growing you in your love for your neighbors?
- Have you ever found yourself excusing your lack of love by trying to limit who your neighbor is like the lawyer did in Luke 10:29-37?

- How has the information age challenged your understanding of who your neighbor is? Is it possible to obey Jesus' royal law in a world where we see so many needs?
- How can we manage our busy Southern California schedules so that we have time and resources to love our neighbors? Is it a matter of our hearts or of our schedule and pocketbooks? Or both?
- How has God been bringing new neighbors into your life to love? (And not just those in your literal neighborhoods!)
- Can we fulfill the royal law of James 2:8 without keeping it perfectly? Why or why not?
- James gets intense in James 2:9-11. Why does he extend the discussion of favoritism to lawbreaking and two of the Ten Commandments?
- What are some of the responses we should have if we realize that we have smashed God's Law by showing favoritism?
- How should we understand James' warning in 2:12-13a that we will be judged by the law of liberty? How can we balance justification by faith with verses that promise an evaluative judgment?
- What is comforting about the phrase "law of liberty"?
- Read Matthew 5:7 and Jesus' parable in Matthew 18:23-35. How do both passages help us understand James 2:12-13a?
- James 2:13b does not mean that no one will be judged because God is merciful. What does it mean? Whose mercy do you think is in view in V.13b?
- How has God's mercy toward you made you a merciful person?
- What is the difference between mercy and partiality? Why are they incompatible?